



Case Information

Reference/Case ID	300018743		
Scheduled Monument	East Fortune, airfield		
Index no	SM4804	Grid ref	NT 54100 78800
Date application validated	21 November 2016		
Summary of proposed works	Provision to update essential cables		

1. Summary recommendation

This report recommends that approval for updating essential cables at East Fortune Airfield be **granted**.

2. Background

The monument is an airfield, initially established in 1915 as an airship base and Royal Naval Air Service training school. In 1918, it became an RAF Station but also continued to act as an airship base, hosting the departure of the first east to west non-stop trans-Atlantic flight by an airship in 1919. During the Second World War, the focus of the base shifted from the north of the airfield complex to the south; the main surviving buildings on the site date from this period. The airfield was closed shortly after the war, but was re-opened to provide a temporary airport for Edinburgh in 1961. Today, elements of the main runway complex are used as a racetrack and a base for micro-light aircraft, while the WWII building complex houses the National Museum of Scotland's Museum of Flight.

The scheduled area is extensive covering approximately 150ha to incorporate the runways, perimeter tracks, control tower, hangars and associated buildings.

The monument is of national importance as a rare survival of a substantial military airfield incorporating elements from both World Wars. It has an inherent potential to make a significant addition to the understanding of the past, in particular to provide information on the defence of Britain through two World Wars. It also serves as a very



visible memorial to these conflicts and the intense effort that the nation put into defensive preparations and offensive training.

This application relates to the south-western corner of the main base area and relates to the ongoing use of a building within that part of the complex. Today, this area is immediately to the north of the entrance for the Museum complex. The building affected is believed to date to the WWII use of the site or the period immediately after; its height and substantial doors indicate it was likely to have been a workshop. The area around is laid to grass crossed by modern tarmac roads and parking areas. The application is for the installation of a new telecommunications cable to serve an existing workshop. It has been submitted by the Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland.

The application is accompanied by a location plan, a plan showing the nature and route of the trenching and cable laying works and a series of photographs showing the final cable route into and within the building.

3. Proposals

- Excavation of service trench, laying of telecommunications duct and backfilling of trench
- Installation of telecommunications cable within building.

Consented works – the trench to be excavated will be approximately 40m long. The depth and width of the excavations will be subject to the ground conditions encountered but will fall within the range of 350mm to 900mm. The dimensions of the duct carrying the telecommunications cable are not specified in the application but will fall within the range of 50mm to 250mm outlined in the supporting material.

The installation of the cable within the building will involve the application of fixing sections of cable to the wall using the same materials as existing cable lines. Existing apertures will be used to gain access through walls.

Aims – to provide telecommunications facilities to allow the building to continue in use as a functioning business unit.

Timetable – no specific timetable for works has been provided.

Personnel – the work will be undertaken by BT Openreach.

4. Representations received

No third party representations were received.



5. Report

a) Policy considerations

The application should be considered with the following legislative and policy considerations in mind:

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

Part 1 Section 2: Control of works affecting scheduled monuments

Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016

3.14. A monument is included in the schedule to secure the long-term legal protection of the monument in the national interest, in situ and as far as possible in the state it has come down to us. Scheduled monuments have an intrinsic value as monuments, not related to any concept of active use. It is the value of the monument to the nation's heritage, in terms set out in the section on Scheduling in Chapter 2 of this policy statement that is the primary consideration in determining applications for scheduled monument consent.

3.15. Monuments are subject to decay and the threat of destruction, from natural and human causes. Conservation work is normally needed to prolong the life of a monument, but there is a risk that this can be so invasive that it irreversibly modifies the monument's character and affects the special interest or features that made the monument important in the first place.

3.16. Works on scheduled monuments should therefore normally be the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in a monument.

3.17. As each monument will require treatment specific to its individual nature, characteristics, significance and needs, any proposed change to it must be fully and explicitly justified.

3.18. Scheduled monument consent applications must be considered in terms of the cultural significance of the monument and the impact that the proposals would have upon this cultural significance. The more important particular features of the monument are to its cultural significance, the greater will be the case against interventions which modify these features.

3.20. Where change is proposed, it should be carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed, properly planned and executed, and where appropriate in the context of an individual monument, reversible.



b) Assessment

The proposed works involve the provision of updated telecommunications cables to a building forming part of the main base complex at East Fortune. The works are intended to facilitate the continued use of the building as a business unit.

The physical impact of the proposed trench works would be the disturbance of an area of ground with a maximum dimension of around 32 cubic metres, although the actual area affected is likely to be less. This is a tiny percentage of the overall monument, limited to an area where the cultural significance relates to the visible characteristics of the site: these characteristics would be restored as part of the works. The works cannot be considered to affect the cultural significance of the monument.

The physical impact of the installation of the cable within the building itself will be minimal, with only the visible addition of the cable itself and the minor impact of the fixings required to keep it in place. These works would not affect the cultural significance of the monument.

c) Other material considerations, including impact of the works on Protected Species and Places

No impact on Protected Species and Places considered likely – see PP&S assessment.

d) Conclusion

The application should be viewed as works as set out in both Part 1 Section 2 of the AMAA Act 1979 and paragraph 3.4 of the policy statement.

The works, comprising the installation of a telecommunications cable, are being done to elements of the monument in such a way that they will have a minimal impact on the cultural significance of the monument. They do not, therefore, conflict with paragraphs 3.16 and 3.18 of the policy statement.

The objectives of the proposed work have been clearly set out and include the following public benefits: the continued use of the building as a business unit, providing a viable use for the structure generating income to assist with the maintenance of the site. The works are therefore considered to be in accordance with paragraph 3.17 of the policy statement.

The application meets paragraph 3.20 because it has demonstrated that the works have been carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed and properly planned.

Consequently, no conditions are considered necessary.



6. Recommended decision

The works proposed are considered acceptable in meeting the terms of national policy for scheduled monuments, and also accounting for other material considerations.

I recommend consent is **granted without conditions**.

7. Conditions

No conditions have been attached to this decision.

8. Approval

Case officer	Deirdre Cameron	Date	11 January 2017
Approved by	Iona Murray	Date	12 January 2017

Annex A – list of supporting documents

- Location plan (NA137579)
- Plan showing route of trench and duct sections
- Photographs showing proposed route of cable into building
- Wayleave permission letter from BT Openreach dated 6/10/2016